



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

those days. Also Holen's Latin version has had no influence on Belfagor.

As to whether Machiavelli, or Brevio, or Doni is the author of the famous story, a question which has never been entirely settled during the past three hundred and fifty years,<sup>13</sup> there are reasons never advanced yet, that prove Machiavelli's authorship beyond the shadow of a doubt. Whether Machiavelli in his turn drew on popular tradition only, or whether he had occasion to make use of the old French version of the *Lamentationes Matheoli* or some other written work, remains to be determined. Straparola's novel<sup>14</sup> which has generally been classed as a mutilated reproduction of Machiavelli's or Brevio's *Belfagor*, differs very materially from them inasmuch as it combines the marriage of the devil with another story which, likewise of Indian origin, has furnished the fundamental idea of Molière's *Le médecin malgré lui*. Sansovino's novel, on the other hand, is nothing but a reprint of Brevio's *Belfagor*, with a few insignificant additions or omissions, and one apparently accidental change of a word. In Germany Kaufringer's poem was followed by quite a number of Latin and German versions, among which we mention with Professor Schmidt-Wartenberg a master-song, a farce, and a carnival-play by Hans Sachs. Though none of these has been directly derived from Kaufringer, they all but one agree with him in two traits never found in Italy: the devil marries an old woman instead of a young lady, and he demands of the man who is to cast him out his share of the profits.

Wezel's Belphegor has hardly anything but the name in common with any other Belphegor or Belfagor. His hero does not go to Pluto or Lucifer, but sails to America, and fights for the liberty of the colonies in the Revolutionary war. The Belphegor of classical German literature, finally, has remained unwritten because Mephistopheles, warned by the sad experiences of his cousin, did not venture to listen to the advances of lovely Martha Schwerdlein.

The great importance of Kaufringer's poem

<sup>13</sup> Most recent writers consider Machiavelli's authorship probable, but none has proved it.

<sup>14</sup> Le xlii *Piacevoli Notti del Sig. G. F. Straparola*. ii, 4.

rests in the first place upon the fact that it antedates all other European versions, except the old French, by probably no less than one hundred and fifty years. For while Kaufringer seems to belong to the last part of the fourteenth century, Brevio's novel was printed in 1545, Machiavelli's in 1549 (written before 1527), Straparola's in 1550 and Doni's in 1551. Hans Sachs composed his pieces in 1556 and 1557, and Sansovino published his reprint in 1561. In the second place, Kaufringer's poem together with Holen's version and a Sicilian folk-tale of to-day, are the only versions in which the devil breaks his word right away, and refuses to leave the very first possessed person. Even if Kaufringer knew the Old French version, it cannot have been his only source.

We refrain from extending our comments to other poems of Kaufringer. Until Euling<sup>15</sup> publishes the variants he promised to furnish ten years ago in order to remedy a shortcoming of his edition, students of comparative folk-lore may consult with profit Bebel's *Facetiae* and Crane's edition of *Jacques de Vitry*.

A. GERBER.

Earlham College.

#### FRENCH LITERATURE.

*Manuel de l'Histoire de la Littérature Française*, par FERDINAND BRUNETIÈRE. Paris: Ch. Delagrave, 1898. 8vo, pp. 531.

IN this his latest work, Mr. Brunetière enters upon an entirely new field of study, or at least upon a new method of treatment of a study that he has made his own; namely, the application of the theory of evolution to the history of literature. We may speak of two distinct periods in Mr. Brunetière's career as a critic. In the first he established certain principles, or "idées fondamentales," by means of which he formed his judgments and which account for the severity, bitterness, antagonism, and his claim to exercise an authority in literary matters, so conspicuous in his writings from 1875-1890. It is during this first period that he was groping in the dark, vainly seeking to formulate a theory which would embody his principles. His erudition had until now aided

<sup>15</sup> *Heinrich Kaufringers Gedichte*, p. ix.

him in forming his tastes, his tastes formed general ideas, these general ideas discovered and created, through historical facts, relations, currents or chains, thus organizing historical matter in pictures of *ensembles*, and establishing literary history in its true or probable succession. At this stage of his career, 1890, Mr. Brunetière perceived the adaptability of the theory of evolution to his ideas, and at once incorporated it into his theories. In the works prior to the present volume, in which he applies the theory of evolution, he confines himself to one species of literature, such as criticism, lyricism, and the drama. In the present volume he embraces the whole field of French literature, from its origin to 1875. In this respect this book is a new departure. However, this work is to be but an outline of a greater and more detailed history.

Instead of the usual divisions by centuries and species, such as poetry and prose, the drama and the novel, he replaces these divisions by literary epochs. The reason for this is a natural result of his application of the theory of evolution.

"Why should we date literary epochs by centuries, or even by the advent of a prince, when neither the epochs of physics or chemistry are treated thus? We must treat literature as we would the growth of a species in the animal or vegetable kingdoms, in order to give a continuity of movement and life."

A second object of the book is to treat the influence of works on works. We wish to do differently from our predecessors—this is the origin and principle causing changes of taste as well as literary revolutions.

A third object is to pay special attention to transition periods, for they explain and prepare the other periods, periods of activity. This will account for the fact that many obscure authors are treated at greater length in this history than is usually done. Mr. Brunetière has made a selection of authors, who, according to his judgment, are important in the development of literary history.

The book is exceedingly interesting, instructive, and valuable to the students of literature, less so to the general reader.

There are two distinct methods pursued in this history. The first half of the page, printed in large clear type, treats the history of

French literature on a broad, general, philosophical and critical plan, regardless of dates, names or events, only treating developments of principles and ideas. The discussion is comprehensible to and appreciable by a thorough student of French literature only, one who is familiar with the philosophy of French literary history. The ideas or principles evolved in the course of centuries in French literature he has grouped under five headings and in three books:

Le Moyen Age, 842-1498.

L'Age Classique, 1498-1801.

L'Age Moderne, 1801-1875.

The five subjects treated are:

1. Le Moyen Age.
2. La Formation de l'Idéal Classique, 1498-1610.
3. La Nationalisation de la Littérature, 1610-1722.
4. La Déformation de l'Idéal Classique, 1720-1801.
5. L'Age Moderne.

The lower part of the page, in small print, deals with events, dates, works, and authors. We find a copious bibliography under each subject; a nearly complete list of the works, best editions, with dates and principal sources of reference. This in itself is of the greatest value to the student. In the treatment we have no definite results or opinions placed before us, but directions how to work, what to examine, important questions to study, points of controversy, usually with references to information on these questions.

One will meet with disappointments in this history in the way of omissions. Authors that we should expect to find are not even mentioned; whereas, we find authors and works treated at length, that many students of French literature have not read, nor even heard of. We must remember, however, that only those works and authors are treated that are important in the development of literary ideas, or that have furthered the development of literary species.

Probably the most valuable part to the student is found in the references and sources of the early literature and in the chapter treating of: *La Nationalisation de la Littérature*.

Few critics have ever shown such mastery, and such fine interpretation of the spirit of a field of literature as Mr. Brunetière has done in this volume.

The following is a short synopsis of the critical text of the book :

In the Middle Ages there seems to have been a common manner of thinking and feeling imposed by the triple authority of religion, the feudal system and scholasticism ; these made themselves felt so strongly as to obliterate all distinctions of origin, race, and personality. This close blending of thought and feeling in Europe makes it impossible to detect the original source of any literary species.

The races of modern Europe are historical formations, of which the literatures are only one of the multiple factors. There were nations before races, and before there were nations in Europe, all Europe was one homogeneous, indivisible whole, and the literature is an expression of it. It is uniform, hence, impersonal. Nearly all *chansons* or *fabliaux* could have been written by the same author. There is no personality because the authors were not free to act, feel and think as they were later. They felt and thought in a body or group which accounts for the dearth of lyricism and every preoccupation of art. The literature is very general, deprived of individual and local signification, hence impersonal. A second characteristic is its immobility. A *chanson de geste* under Charlemagne is the same as under Saint Louis. Centuries even make no change in the conception or psychology of the work. There has been no exterior intervention or individual caprice to retard or further the development which was slow and natural, but interesting.

The epic at first is only history, but soon attributes to heroes virtues beyond human power ; finally history becomes the pretext only for the writer's imagination. The chronicle soon replaces the epic, and verse gives way to prose, and we have history. Thus we have a differentiation of species ; nearly contemporaneous with this is one of classes. The *fabliaux* prove the intellectual emancipation of the *villain*. A class of society has formed, as it were, a literature after its own image. At the same time in the aristocratic class the indi-

vidual manifests himself and lyricism is born ; however, the state of mind and the customs do not yet permit personal literature. The clergy, in order to retain its power, also encourages a literature—*miracles* and *mystères* are the result. A differentiation of nationalities, binding itself to that of species and classes is now noticeable. The various forms of species take a different form with the various nationalities. The whole of Europe, at first a unity, is now broken up and takes on different garbs. The *esprit gaulois*, so noticeable in French literature, is fortunately counterbalanced by other influences, especially by scholasticism which gives it clearness, precision, and accuracy. A special trait of this new literature is the tendency to universality. Writers write to act and to propagate general ideas ; this trait has made it so popular and authoritative. These first species are soon exhausted and new ones do not develop quickly. The language becomes heavy, complicated, obscure and spiritless. The chronicle has full sway, and the times are not favorable to light literature. Villon is a great poet, but he does not create a school, because rhetoricians exercise the chief influence. Philippe de Commines and Villon have survived, but these talents are accidents in this time. All phases of literature have passed into a period of decadence ; they have had all the qualities of childhood. When the spirit of the Renaissance began to manifest itself, there was nothing to destroy. It gave to French literature three new things : a model of art, an ambition to reproduce the great examples of antiquity and imitate the forms, and to accomplish this a new manner of observing nature and man. On this is built the classic ideal. Humanism transformed the very bases of education and intellectual culture, and is the primary cause of the formation of classicism in France.

The first trait of this new spirit is the development of individualism. Each one was desirous of being different from every one else, to surpass and excel and to have this acknowledged publicly, and this fact gave birth to criticism. A second influence is the idea of goodness, the divinity of nature, which is closely allied to that of individualism, for to

obey nature is to assure the development of our personality. Rabelais in his *Pantagruel* teaches that nature is the instructress of virtues. He advocates liberty in all phases of development. He is inspired by the common ideas of his time, and his work may be called the *Bible of the Renaissance*. According to him the great enemy of man is custom, law, authority and constraint; these he attacked.

A further trait of the Renaissance spirit is the sentiment of art. Nature itself is not enough, the artist must add to it from his own individuality and the union of the two; that is, the subordination of the imitation of nature and the development of the individual to the realization of beauty, is the spirit shown in the Renaissance by the poets of the *Pléiade*. They strove to reform the language as artists, and if they have failed in this it was because they did not always feel the difference which separates one author from another, and because they lacked the spirit of discernment or criticism. This sentiment of the power of form or style, is an important element of classicism.

When it was generally realized what the philosophy of nature was, the Reformation was ripe. They both tend to the emancipation of the individual. The object of the Renaissance was to de-Christianize the world, to give it over to Paganism; whereas the Reformation desired to lead back Christianity to the severity of its primitive institution. They were enemies. In this the race element became manifest. To decide between humanism and moral preoccupations was the question, and from this conflict resulted the differentiation of the literatures of the North and South. Modern literatures begin now.

A first effect in French literature is the Latinization of culture; that is, the Greek language and literature fall back to the colleges and the erudite. Latin is substituted. From this there are two results—care for form and taste for general ideas or *la réduction à l'Universel*. Amyot is the great interpreter of this. Montaigne was directly influenced by him, and he has better than anyone known how to analyze the *ego*. He learns from the Latin authors experiences that he finds in himself, and thus his *ego* is his own as well as ours. He ex-

presses himself by his universal being, others do it by a special trait; he observes psychologically. The spirit of the Reformation strove to discipline nature. It tried to keep away foreign influences and to give to the individual such virtues as he would not naturally strive for. This is the first indication of a nationalization of literature. The leading idea was to maintain the social and moral order. We must all work to build up one another and establish the basis of *une honnête amitié* and *un modèle d'honnête homme*. This becomes the leading idea of the next century and a-half. Thus is disengaged a national literature which is social, general, broadly moral and æsthetic. In order to realize completely its true character, French literature had to suppress the spirit of individualism, of indiscipline and license. The *Satires* of Regnier champion this. They may be said to be a protestation of the *esprit gaulois* against the absolute liberty of the individual.

The *Précieuses* have freed literature from the pedantry with which it is still affected under Ronsard and Montaigne, and made it *mondaine*. They purified and polished both literature and society and caused a revolution in language. But this is not all: they unraveled the reasons which have directed the choice of this new language. The reform of the language can only assure the reform of literary habits. They refined and sharpened the intelligence as well, for they studied the development of sentiments and passions, whence came a mass of shades unknown to the preceding generation. Their object was to be the interpreter of common or general ideas, not of particular opinions; hence their influence is lasting. This spirit has prepared the way and success of Corneille, whose object was to gain the suffrage of the *Précieuses*. He purified the theatre, making it accessible to women. He belongs to the *Précieuses* inasmuch as he realized their ideal of art.

A great factor in furthering the nationalization of literature was the founding of the French Academy by Richelieu, who desired to create a type of the modern state; to establish this, unity in politics as well as in art and letters was necessary. But the men of letters were not always minded as the Cardinal.

Descarte's influence is said to be great. By his *Discours de la Méthode* he taught the writers to recognize and possess their powers. Nearly all writers after him were Cartesians in their doctrines and methods of application. However the work was not epoch-making. The influences of Spain and Italy were repelled by other influences, and the most important is that of *Jansénism*. Arnault's *Fréquente Communion*, 1643, had the effect of changing the simply agreeable questions and discussions of the day to more serious ones; yet it was too scholastic and theological. It remained for Pascal with his *Lettres provinciales* to found pure French prose, and to put in simple prose all that had been discussed for the last fifty years. From them dates, also, *la fixation des caractères de la littérature et de l'idéal classiques*.

Bossuet's style was greatly changed and his thought liberated by them. These letters paved the way for all the master-works to follow, and founded the naturalistic school as well. Molière, Racine, Boileau, and La Fontaine are under the influence of Pascal. Their principle of art consists essentially in the imitation of nature; but it was not the object or end of art. They believed in perfecting nature, and for this a perpetual care for form and style was necessary. This was new to the time and with this comes the real nationalization of literature. It is found under the reign of Louis XIV. The literature is a direct picture and outcome of the new life that grew up with the King. France becomes the ideal of Europe. The King's personality shone in every phase of development. The literature is human and natural and will endure because it is not written for one period, but all periods, inasmuch as it has elements that will apply to all times—universal, human, national and free from foreign influence. In each great writer there is something peculiarly French; as in Racine, depth, subtle analysis, moral observation, harmony of proportion; in Boileau force and precision of language; in La Fontaine Epicurean nonchalance and Gallic malice. In all of their writings is found a didactic and broad moral tendency.

With the decay of the empire literature also decays, being left in the hands of *débauchés*,

*précieux* and *libertins*. Bossuet alone endeavors to check and restrain them and from 1680 to 1690 nearly all his best works are written; but *libertinage* rapidly grew into importance under the form of degenerate Cartesianism, and the great discussion arose of being a Christian and Cartesian at the same time. Malebranche humanizes what the Christian doctrine offers of the most harsh and contrary to reason; Bayle's criticism has the same object and Fontenelle popularizes the discussion by clothing his Cartesianism in the language of the *Précieux*. Perrault in his *Siècle de Louis le Grand* endeavors to prove the superiority of the modern world over the ancient, whence results the quarrel of the ancients and moderns. From this emancipation from the influence of the ancient world three consequences result:

1. The observation of real and contemporaneous things; 2. the foundation of the Academy of Sciences (1689); 3. the scorn or disdain of tradition, or the rage for novelty; the decadence or abasement of all noble or elevated species. French literature is in a state of exhaustion and there is no genius to reanimate it. Even the language changes its character, taking a lighter and more logical turn, partly due to Spanish influence. French prose turns to the narrative, natural on account of the interest shown in contemporaneous affairs; the language and thought thus becoming the close image of the French spirit, the spirit of sociability. Men write for others, to amuse and please and to be applauded, for in this lies their fortune and reputation. Such literature is of itself decadent, and with it the deformation of the classic ideal sets in. A new aristocracy is brought to light under Louis XV, *douteuse ou impure en sa source, ignorante à plaisir, cynique et débraillée dans ses mœurs, raffinée toutefois dans ses goûts*. Woman's influence is supreme, and only through her can the writer gain a position at Court. This spirit has advanced literature a step by emancipating sensibility from the narrow tutorship of the masters of the preceding age; it is found especially in the comedies of Marivaux, and in Voltaire's *Zaire* and *Alzire* it even reaches pathos. This sensibility under its various forms of *marivaudage*, pathos and weeping.

does not produce any lasting works. *L'homme sensible* cannot be a profound observer nor a faithful imitator of nature, hence the psychological and moral observation of the preceding age is changed to a social observation and only manners are depicted. Nature is the same everywhere and so is man, whence the idea of a universal man. To this idea Montesquieu tends in his *Esprit des lois*, the variety of laws being for the good of society. This social spirit is felt in all writers of the time and literature becomes more and more scientific, finally ending in that of the Encyclopædists. English influence naturally plays an important part, even as early as 1725. As long as French literature was dominated by the Classic ideal it preserved its independence; but now English thought and ideals replace it. Thus from the psychological and moral, French literature changes first to the social, then to the scientific social and, finally, under English influence to the purely practical, and this is the encyclopædic spirit. The encyclopædists do not study man, but the relations of man, and necessarily lose sight of the diversity of nature which distinguishes men among themselves. They are experimenters and their literature lacks reality, substance and life, being philosophical and speculative only. The language becomes impoverished, the syntax narrowed and strained.

The Government and the Salons were opposed to them, the latter being especially harmful to literature, for so many mediocre talents were encouraged by them. They flattered and their flattery led men of letters to the paradox; however, the Salons made scientific subjects popular.

About this time Rousseau's powerful influence made itself felt by opening the way to nature, closed for several centuries. Everyone is himself in the measure of freedom in which his sentiments are expressed and this freedom is nature. We are constrained by our habits and they change more or less; before they change they are nature herself; that is, nature is opposed to civilization. The object, then, of education is to free ourselves from the prejudices that prevent nature from developing according to herself, which is entirely opposed to the ancient doctrines. We are

dependent upon nature and must obey her. By this doctrine the individual is emancipated again from the tyranny of society, and sensibility is substituted for the rights of intelligence; principles entirely opposed to those of humanism and Classicism.

The great questions of the day, such as the Jesuits, rights of publication, questions of religion, legal despotism, etc., give to Voltaire this universality and authority of influence which he had sought so long. The direct cause of this supremacy was a general peace, as the Court and Parliament did not take sides in these questions. When Louis XVI. mounted the throne there was perfect freedom for the Encyclopædists and Economists, which gave rise to the last effort of the Classic spirit against the Anglomania which was menacing French gallantry, customs and literature. At this time there prevailed a kind of mixed tendency, best expressed in Beaumarchais, Le Sage and Scarron, whose inspiration was Classical, but whose subject-matter was mixed. André Chénier shows the true genuine Classical spirit. He believed that true beauty and perfection lay in the master-works of the ancients, and that originality and invention lay not in servile imitation, but in clothing the thought in the ancient immortal forms. He revived Classicism but it could not live, for it had held sway for nearly two centuries, and the society of which it was the expression had passed away. Literature grows and progresses as any animal or vegetable species. The period of Classicism was over. The Neo-Classicalists were wrong when they said that new thoughts can be built on antique verses. If an epoch ceases to think like a preceding epoch it can not build its work on that of this epoch. Thus, then, were the Neo-Classicalists wrong in borrowing poems from generations whose ideas they no longer shared, and taking as models for writing, master-writers who were no longer master-thinkers.

Three men, however, broke entirely away from the past, Condorcet, Buffon, and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. The first founded the religion of science, and transmitted to us all the error and truth contained in the encyclopædic doctrine in his *Esquisse d'une histoire des progrès de l'esprit humain*. Buffon's *Époques*

*de la nature* founded a science of life. Bernerdin de Saint-Pierre is important on account of his language, a language of description. His excess of sentimentalism only serves as a preparation for Chateaubriand's *Génie*, with whom there is opened a literary epoch, the modern age.

The first effect of the disorganization of the Classic ideal was the emancipation of the individual, the *ego* becoming sovereign, the object of itself and its final cause. The *Confessions* were a direct precursor of Chateaubriand and Mme de Staël whose works are personal, psychological and lyrical as well, at the same time teaching moral perfection. He tries to prove that reason and philosophy always acquire new forces in the numberless misfortunes of humanity; therefore the possibility of restoring on the basis of Rousseau's morality everything the Revolution had put in ruins, and the beginning or promise of a new order of things. Science and philosophy for her are only means of moral perfection, whose object is the moral amelioration of humanity. This new sentimentalism and individualism are most vigorously opposed, because they are a most serious assault upon the philosophy of the eighteenth century. Bonald attacks Condorcet and Condillac; de Maistre, Bacon and Voltaire; Lamennais, Rousseau. These men, probably more than Chateaubriand and Mme de Staël, operate against the Encyclopædists, and have made possible the *méditations* and *odes* such as they are; they have created a religious poetry which elevated French poetry to heights probably never before reached.

The second sign of a new literature was the taste shown for foreign literatures, a natural result from the continuous European wars. The events of 1815 furthered this taste; Frenchmen returned from exile with new ideas and knowledge of foreign affairs and literatures. Especially from 1815-1825 is there a common manner of thinking and feeling from which literary cosmopolitanism is born; this cosmopolitanism differs from humanism which takes Greco-Latin culture as its basis, by appropriating the most national of national literatures, and by making of them a composition which is developed by contrasts with other literatures. The new spirit is furthered by Aug. Thierry,

who unites the sentiment of the diversity of place and epoch which are inseparable and forms local coloring; by Ampère and Magnin who distinguish between literary and non-literary works, and free literature from its political tutorship. Romanticism is nothing more than the triumph in literature and art of individualism. Everything between 1825-1835 furthered this development of individualism and this best explains the causes of its greatness, of its decadence and the nature of the reaction it was to cause.

While Classicism makes impersonality one of the conditions of perfection, romanticism makes personality or the freedom of being one's self and nothing but one's self a primary condition of art. What interests the artist is the subject of his works, and in them we find our own emotions reflected; thus we become interested and the greatest lyric poets are the most personal. They naturally needed a broader vocabulary and a freer verse, which led to an individual choice of words, to a revolution of language. This personal character is manifested in all literary species, and a reaction is natural and necessary. The failure in 1843 of *Les Burgraves* and the success of *Lucrèce* is fatal to the drama. Although Scribe and Dumas wrote badly, yet they understood that people do not assemble in the theatre to listen to the author speak to them of himself, but will become interested in a general subject. Ceasing to be personal the drama ceases to be romantic. The novel shows an impersonal observation.

It was Balzac, however, who freed it from the conventions of romanticism, and raised it to a perfection which, perhaps, no one has reached nor excelled. He showed clearly that the true literary function of the novel is the abridged representation of common life, giving the novel a historic and documentary value, precise, particular, local, with a general and lasting psychological signification. All human passions play the same rôle as in human life. He observes the human being and his surroundings just as a naturalist does the animal or plant; no impressions, but reality. Science was inaugurating a movement entirely opposed to romanticism, one of objective observation entirely disengaged from



all personal or individual element.

Auguste Comte is the founder of this new movement; but in his philosophy there is as much of Comte as there is of Victor Hugo in his works. Comte opposes the eclecticism of Cousin, which makes of the *ego* the judge of others. Our knowledge of others serves to correct the idea we have of ourselves; we are only the scene or place of our impressions. True psychology lies in history and society, not in us, but outside and round about us, because we can only feel and experience our impressions.

Another reaction against romanticism is socialism, such as is found in Pierre Leroux. To live it is essential to have humanity for an object, for a normal life is one which does not violate the bond which unites us to humanity; we must, therefore, live as though we were to live eternally in humanity.

History also abandoned the personal recital and endeavors to be an impartial recorder of the past. In criticism Sainte-Beuve reaches out a step farther by pointing out the reasons for the distinctions of species and the hierarchy of talents. He shows that there are families of *esprit*, and that there are *genres* and species in these *genres*, and ranks in these species, and that our impressions count for nothing in criticism. "Les considérants sont tout" and the value of these depends upon the laws that govern the human mind. This system has been fatal to romanticism. The finest verses of such poets as de Vigny and Gautier are entirely free from the romantic spirit. The principle now was to compose, sculpture, gild, hew, finish, file and polish a work like a marble statue; and Gautier succeeds in accomplishing this. No writer ever showed such disinterestedness in a work as is seen in *Emaux et Camées*. The writers mingle as little as possible of themselves with their impressions; to accomplish this the utmost care for form and choice of words is necessary. This principle introduces a generation of artists, replacing that of improvisors, and completely routs romanticism. Everything drifts to study and observation, and this is formed into a system by Taine and Renan, who are under the influence of Comte, only differing from him in the particular appropriation of the same gen-

eral method to diverse subjects. A kind of intermediary between Taine and Renan is Littré, and these three give to naturalism a doctrinal cohesion, consistency, and solidity that romanticism always lacked.

A point that nearly all naturalists, Dumas, Flaubert, de Lisle, have in common is impersonality; that is, they themselves are not the subject of their observation; the man is subordinated to the artist. *Madame Bovary* and the *Poèmes antiques* have not invented provincial life nor the Gods of India; they already existed; but they have fixed the object of their imitation and described only that which they believed to see permanent in them. Reproduction of nature is the object, submission to the model is the means, and impersonality is the triumph. Thus does literature become thoroughly scientific.

A third characteristic of contemporaneous naturalism is impassibility; that is, the most complete disinterestedness of all that is not art nor science. The artist must not show an interest in nor give an opinion of his characters; a fact is a fact; proof and not judgment is the means. If the reader does not draw the moral from the book it is because he is either an imbecile, or because it is false in point of exactness. All this develops the theory of art for art's sake, which leads the writer to the sentiment of the great difficulties of the art of writing, to the respect for language, and to the religion of form, without which no one has left anything permanent in the French language. The platitude inherited from the *idéologues* and encyclopædists, the liberty so much abused and pushed even to incorrectness, the incoherence of metaphors, the entanglement of turns and phrases, vulgarity of manners, familiarity of bad tone; all this is not found in de Lisle, Taine and Flaubert. They have given to style a degree of precision, fullness and solidity; but they err in their belief that an assemblage of words, independent of what they express, has a beauty in itself. However, their talent for writing has made the fortune of their æsthetic doctrines. Victor Hugo even imitates de Lisle in his *Légende des siècles*, but remains a romanticist because we only have his impressions.

Michelet and George Sand likewise endeav-

or to be impersonal, but they insist that art must not be separated from life, nor must the artist withdraw or isolate himself from the world. He must write for everybody. "Qu'est-ce que c'est que l'art sans les cœurs et les esprits où on le verse?" This the naturalists would not allow, and on account of this they found a great obstacle in propagating their doctrines. The dramatists especially have mixed the two principles, and after freeing themselves from the doctrine of art for art's sake, Feuillet, Augier and Dumas write *pièces à thèse* and moralize to their heart's content. But this art now falls into the hands of buffoons and the gross pleasure of the populace. The language becomes brutal, low, *banal*. However, these means were the best in their time and the most efficacious, finally turning to the profit of art.

In the first place the art of Dumas has triumphed over the dilettantism so prominent after 1870-1871; no one more eloquently than he denounced its dangerous and anti-social tendency.

He also protested vigorously against naturalism strangely degenerated from the idea that Taine and Flaubert had formed of it.

However, other influences have aided Dumas—Schopenhauer whose idealistic pessimism differs so profoundly from the vulgar pessimism of the base naturalists; George Eliot whose naturalism is, so to speak, a moral or sociology, differing from the artistic and impassible naturalism of Flaubert; Tolstoi and Ibsen, whose great inspiration is *pitié sociale*. All these foreign expressions and ideas have been united in Dumas and Sand, hence have triumphed over art for art's sake. Dumas believed that man was not made for art, but art for man, and this is generally recognized today.

Individualism of the romanticists, impersonality of the naturalists, has become social again in modern French literature, and it is to be hoped that it will hold to it, for if dilettantism has developed and excited the curiosity of the mind and sharpened penetration, and if naturalism has often been of great service, social literature can appropriate the conquests of the two; whereas, these cannot appropriate those of social literature, which likewise con-

forms to the tradition of four or five centuries of French genius. It expresses, in the language of the whole world, truths that interest and affect the whole world. The socialization of French literature has enabled French literature to resist foreign influences, and to retain only that which it could appropriate for the needs of its genius, and especially to exercise in the world the intellectual domination that it has exercised more often than any other people. And the object of this literature is to tend to the perfection of civil life or to the progress of civilization.

HUGO P. THIEME.

University of Michigan.

### FRENCH LITERATURE.

A. *French Practical Course*, by JULES MAGNENAT. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1897. 12mo, pp. xi+286.

B. *La Bibliothèque de mon Oncle*, par Rodolphe Töpffer. Edited by ROBERT L. TAYLOR. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1898. 12mo, pp. xx+201.

C. *Histoire d'un Merle Blanc*, par Alfred de Musset. Edited by the Misses AGNÈS COINTAT and H. ISABELLE WILLIAMS. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1898. iv+50 pp.

A. AMONG French grammars written in French and especially prepared for English speaking students, Prof. Magnenat's *French Practical Course* easily stands toward the top, if not indeed at the very head. The rules are carefully worded, and all the grammatical and syntactical peculiarities of French are thoroughly discussed, placing thereby this work on a par with other American grammars of the French language. A further advantage, in addition to this thoroughness, is that the statements are all made in French, being at first very simple, but becoming more difficult as the student progresses. A great desideratum in modern language teaching—conversational use of the tongue studied—is thus filled, without the unconditional employment of natural school methods, and also without taking time from the study of grammar and composition. Several French grammar writers have already made use of this method, but their works have